

GREETINGS TO  
MOST REVEREND EDWARD MOONEY, D. D.

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**Text of Public Reception Address  
Given By Archbishop Mooney**

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citizens make it more difficult for us to form good Catholics. Therefore we must be vitally concerned in all that has to do with the moral welfare of the community in which we live, in all that affects its moral interests.

How extensive these moral interests are in civic affairs, a moment's reflection will reveal, public health, popular recreation, and entertainment, general education, the working conditions of labor, the housing problem of the poor, charitable relief and welfare work—these and a multitude of kindred interests have a definite moral aspect.

A Catholic Bishop cannot, therefore refuse to concern himself with these things or fail to use the influence of his office in support of community movements which promise moral betterment through the solution of problems that touch these things.

These are general statements, I know; but they are at least an expression of deep interest and genuine good will. You could hardly have much confidence in a Rochesterian of one day's standing who ventured into the field of local application of even the soundest principles.

Monsignor Cameron in the name of the clergy has spoken with much feeling and in a way that brings me much consolation and encouragement. Mr. Dwyer, speaking for the laity, eloquently voiced the sentiments that stir in the heart of the average Catholic on the advent of a new bishop.

Neither they nor you will misunderstand if I make a common acknowledgment of their greetings. In fact in doing so I would like to call attention to that striking spirit of unity between clergy and laity, that feeling of closeness and confidence between them, which is one of the outstanding characteristics of American catholicity.

**Unity of Clergy and Laity**

Separated as they are by ecclesiastical function and by the special dedication which is implied in the very word "clergy," priests and people are one in aim and aspiration and effort, and in that unity lies the secret of our strength. Their ideal relation is not a relation merely of the active to the passive, but a relation of co-ordinated activity, in doing the essentially spiritual and moral work of the church.

This is the import of that strong metaphor which St. Paul so often uses and so pointedly applies when he speaks of the church as the mystical body of Christ. "As in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same function—so we being many are one body in Christ and every one members of another." . . . that "doing the truth in charity we may in all things grow up in Him who is the head, even Christ."

Pope Plus XI, with that opportuneness that characterizes his pastoral admonitions and directions has pointed out the growing importance of increased activity on the part of the laity, an activity which he has called "Catholic Action" and defined as the participation of the laity in the work of the clergy.

**Catholic Action**

Essentially this means, it seems to me, that a man should make his Catholicity count not merely for himself, as he is primarily bound to do, but also for others—either in leading them to know the church for what she really is rather than for what she is so often, from lack of knowledge or from positive misinformation, erroneously taken to be, or by bringing into play for the benefit of others the strong moral and spiritual values inherent in Catholic faith and practice.

This apostolate of the laity may be either individual and private or organized and public. In mission countries where the chief work of the church is to grow by the force of winning conviction, I have often had occasion to call the attention of Catholic laymen to the unostentatious but strikingly effective contribution they could make to this growth.

And, in truth, if the Catholic laymen is well enough informed about Catholic doctrine and history to give a satisfactory answer to the well meant query of his non-Catholic friend or chance acquaintance, and above all if he is consistent enough in the practise of his faith to let it appear as a determining influence for good in his daily life, then indeed he is a real, though possibly obscure, apostle.

**Constitutional Organization**

Inevitably the man in the street is going to judge of our Catholic teaching, not from what we priests preach but from how we and you live.

In regard to organized Catholic action there is just a remark or two which it may not be inappropriate for me to make here tonight. The first is that it seems to me that organization is, at least in execution and development, a secondary process. It regulates the functioning of working units and co-ordinates that functioning to an end that is larger than the aim of any one unit.

Practically, therefore, it presupposes activity in a given line. To be concrete in my application of what seems to me a fundamental principle, a few men or women who are actually giving themselves to instruct the ignorant, to feed the hungry, to harbor the harborless, to visit the sick or to do any other of the blessed things which we call the works of mercy are engaged in Catholic action that is significant far beyond the drawing up of a detailed plan of elaborate work that never gets beyond the stage of discussion or even formal adoption.

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**Priesthood  
Of Apostles**

Christ, the universal and everlasting High Priest, was to close the span of His mortal habitation in death. In order, therefore, to perpetuate His Priesthood, He chose His Apostles, and bestowed on them His priestly power of the Consecration of His Body. For on the memorable night of the Last Eucharistic Sacrifice He said to His Apostles:

"Do this in commemoration of Me." (Luke 22:19.)

That is: Perform the sacrifice which I have just consummated. And three days later, He gave to His Apostles, the priestly power to forgive sins.

"As the Father hath sent Me," said He to them. "I also send you." When He had said this, He breathed on them; and He said to them, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them." (John 20:21-23.)

The Apostles therefore received the Priesthood of Christ; namely, the power of the Consecration of the Body and Blood of the Lord; and the power to forgive sins.—The Brooklyn Tablet.

The would-be atheist is inclined to believe in God when the thunders roar, when the lightning strikes, or when the earth quakes.

GREETINGS

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**Abbreviations**

P. A. or Prof. Ap.: Protonary Apostolic: A member of the chief order of prelates in the papal Curia.

V. F.: Vicar Forane (Latin, foraneus, at a distance from the episcopal city): "An experienced priest appointed by his Bishop to exercise a limited jurisdiction over a definite district of the diocese."

V. C.: Vicar Capitular: (Latin, capitularis, pertaining to chapters), a priest, or higher cleric, elected by a cathedral chapter to govern the diocese during the period of vacancy.

V. G.: Vicar General: A priest, or higher cleric appointed by a Bishop to assist him in the government of his diocese.

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